

investment, more jobs, more money for wages at low inflation. It means working people have lower interest rates for house payments, car payments, credit card payments, college loan payments. It means that when there's a global financial crisis, as there was in Asia 2 years ago, we will be less affected by it. And it means the people we sell things to around the world will be able to borrow the money they need at a lower cost, too, because we won't be in there taking it away to fund our bad habits. I'm telling you, it is a gift we could give our children. It would save the lives—the lives of working people by keeping interest rates low for a very long period of time.

Now, I think we have to say, yes, America should get a tax cut, but we should save Social Security and Medicare first, and we ought to do it in a way that allows us to pay off the debt and continue to invest in education, in defense, in the environment, in the things that we have to have to keep this country going. And it will keep us coming together.

Now, I believe that is the right thing to do. But like I said, it's not just an argument anymore. Look at the evidence. Look at the evidence. When you think about all these people that are out there that are still looking for a chance, if we give them a chance, the rest of us will do better. That's what I believe.

Let me just close with this story. I went to Iowa a couple of days ago, had a great time. They had this big crowd of folks. I said, "You all ought to be glad to see me, I'm the only person that's been here in months not running for anything." [Laughter] But I was in Iowa, and I was reminded of two things—in 1993 I went to Iowa when they had that flood—you remember the flood we had along the Mississippi—500-year flood. And there I was in Des Moines, all this flood and the water everywhere. And I went over and I was stacking those sandbags and visiting with the people that were doing it. And I looked down and there was this tiny child who was 13 years old, but was the size of about a 6- or 7-year-old. And I noticed that her bones were bulging everywhere. It turned out she has that brittle bone disease that some children are born with—some children never get out of bed with it—she was

up and walking but there around people stacking sandbags, actually working.

And she had had, I think, 12 or 15 operations already, and was—never had been able to grow—and the knots where her elbows were and in all of her joints because her bones had been broken so many times. The child's name was Brianne Schwantes, I'll never forget her. And I said, "What are you doing here?" I said, "Do you live here?" She said, "No, sir, I live in Wisconsin." But she said, "You know, I saw this on television and I told my parents we ought to go down there and help those people." And I said, "Aren't you afraid of getting hurt?" She said, "Yes, but you know, I could get another break at home. I want to be part of what my country is doing." She said, "These people need all the help they can get."

Last year I went to American University to give a speech. There was Brianne Schwantes, 18 years old, a freshman at American University, with all of her friends. I brought them to a radio address, let them come see me. But what I want you to know is, every year from that year, the time I first met her till then, she kept coming to NIH getting help. NIH—paid for by taxpayers. Well, my daughter—thank God—didn't have brittle bone disease, but I think I'm better off that I live in a country that gives a child like that a chance to grow up and go to college.

I was giving a speech in Iowa, and I looked out, and there was this beautiful African-American girl smiling. The first time I saw her she was a baby, in 1992, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. I spoke at this rally in front of the Quaker Oats plant. I was working my way through the crowd and there's this real tall white lady holding this African-American baby. And I said, "Where did you get that baby?" She smiled and she said, "That's my baby." I said, "Well, where did you get the baby?" She said, "This baby was born in Miami with AIDS and abandoned, and no one would take her. So I thought I should."

So I got so interested in this woman and I figured, well, gosh, it's nice that a nice middle class lady in a place like Iowa would do this. Guess what—this woman had been abandoned by her husband, was raising two children on her own, living in an apartment

where she could barely pay the rent. But she cared enough about a baby she never knew to take this child with AIDS, not knowing whether she would live.

I have seen that child about once a year since 1992. That child was permitted to come to the NIH to get good treatment. And when I was giving that speech in Iowa and I looked out—she is tall now, probably above average height for her age, a perfectly beautiful child, smiling, lighting up the room. She jumped in my arms, and I said, “Jimiya, you’re about to get so big I can’t hold you anymore.”

What I want to tell you—what’s all that got to do with this? I’m glad I live in a country which gave that child a chance to have a life. I’m glad I live in a country where people like her mother, who had no rational way in the world she should have given that child a home, but she did. And what I want to say to you is, I’m not running for anything, but, darn it, we were right. We have evidence. We were right about Social Security and Medicare. And we’re right about keeping our commitments to education. And we’re right about trying to reach out and give people who haven’t been part of this economic recovery a chance to be part of it. And we’re right about trying to secure our economic health for the long term. And we’re right about not cutting anybody out, but cutting everybody in.

And so you gave those ideas the chance to be proved right. I am profoundly grateful that I had the opportunity to be President. I am very grateful I am still President because I think we can do some of the most important things that this administration has done in the next year and a half. But what I want you to do when you go home tonight is to know in the marrow of your bones that what you always believed was right is right, and that you have had a chance to demonstrate that you don’t have to debate anymore, you don’t have to worry, you don’t have to argue.

And tomorrow and every tomorrow from now on, you will be able to stand up with greater confidence in what you believe because it works. And when you get discouraged and when you worry whether if they outspend us by \$3 million or \$4 million, we can prevail, just think about those two little

girls. And you will know, you will know, that it’s worth fighting for that kind of America for all the children of this country in the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:03 p.m. in the State Room at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO; former Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Democratic National Committee; former Deputy Chief of Staff Harold Ickes; former White House assistant Janice Enright; Gerald W. McEntee, president, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; Laura Poisel and her adoptive daughter, Jimiya, who was born with AIDS; and Alfonso Fanjul, who hosted a Democratic National Committee dinner in Coral Gables, FL, on July 13.

Remarks on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and an Exchange With Reporters

July 20, 1999

The President. Good morning. I have just had the privilege of meeting with the three Apollo 11 astronauts who, 30 years ago, carried out the first landing on the Moon: Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins. They and everyone at NASA over the years have made an extraordinary contribution to our Nation and to humanity. I am very grateful to them.

President Kennedy, who set a goal of putting a man on the Moon by the late 1960’s, was committed to using technology to unlock the mysteries of the heavens. But President Kennedy was also concerned that technology, if misused, literally could destroy life on Earth. So another goal he vigorously pursued was one first proposed by President Eisenhower, a treaty to ban for all time the testing of the most destructive weapons ever devised, nuclear weapons.

As a first step, President Kennedy negotiated a limited test ban treaty to ban nuclear tests except those conducted underground. But for far too long nations failed to heed the call to ban all nuclear tests. More countries sought to acquire nuclear weapons and to develop ever more destructive weapons. This threatened America’s security and that

of our friends and allies. It made the world a more dangerous place.

Since I have been President, I have made ending nuclear tests one of my top goals. And in 1996 we concluded a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; 152 countries have now signed it, and 41, including many of our allies, have now ratified it. Today, on Capitol Hill, a bipartisan group of Senators is speaking out on the importance of the treaty. They include Senators Jeffords, Specter, Daschle, Biden, Bingaman, Dorgan, Bob Kerrey, Levin, and Murray. I am grateful for their leadership and their support of this critical agreement.

And today I want to express, again, my strong determination to obtain ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. America already has stopped nuclear testing. We have, today, a robust nuclear force and nuclear experts affirm that we can maintain a safe and reliable deterrent without nuclear tests.

The question now is whether we will adopt or whether we will lose a verifiable treaty that will bar other nations from testing nuclear weapons. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty will strengthen our national security by constraining the development of more advanced and more destructive nuclear weapons and by limiting the possibilities for more countries to acquire nuclear weapons. It will also enhance our ability to detect suspicious activities by other nations.

With or without a test ban treaty, we must monitor such activities. The treaty gives us new means to pursue this important mission, a global network of sensors and the right to request short notice, on-site inspections in other countries. Four former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—David Jones, William Crowe, Colin Powell, and John Shalikashvili—plus the current Chairman, Hugh Shelton, all agree the treaty is in our national interests. Other national leaders, such as former Senators John Glenn and Nancy Kassebaum Baker, agree.

Unfortunately, the Test Ban Treaty is now imperiled by the refusal of some Senators even to consider it. If our Senate fails to act, the treaty cannot enter into force for any country. Think of that. We're not testing now. A hundred and fifty-two countries have signed, 41 have ratified, but if our Senate

fails to act, this treaty and all the protections and increased safety it offers the American people cannot enter into force for any country. That would make it harder to prevent further nuclear arms competition, and as we have seen, for example, in the nuclear tests in India and Pakistan.

Do we want these countries and other regional rivals to join a test ban treaty, or do we want them to stop nuclear testing? Do we want to scrap a treaty that could constrain them? The major nuclear powers, Britain and France, Russia and China, have signed the treaty. Do we want to walk away from a treaty under which those countries and scores of others have agreed not to conduct nuclear tests? I believe it is strongly in our interest to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

The American people consistently have supported it for more than 40 years now. At a minimum, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee should hold hearings this fall. Hearings would allow each side to make its case for and against the treaty, and allow the Senate to decide this matter on the merits. We have a chance right now to end nuclear testing forever. It would be a tragedy for our security and for our children's future to let this opportunity slip away.

I thank those Senators in both parties who today are announcing their clear intention not to do that.

I thank you.

China and Taiwan

Q. Mr. President, did Jiang Zemin tell you that he would use force to counter Taiwan's independence? And would you use force in Taiwan's defense?

The President. First let me tell you I'm going to have a press conference tomorrow, and I will answer a lot of questions. The answer to that question is, we had a conversation in which I restated our strong support of the "one China" policy and our strong support for the cross-strait dialog, and I made it clear, our policy had not changed, including our view under the Taiwan Relations Act that it would be—we would take very seriously any abridgement of the peaceful dialog. China knows very well what our policy is, and we know quite well what their policy is. I believe that the action of the United States

in affirming our support of the “one China” policy and encouraging Taiwan to support that and the framework within which dialog has occurred will be helpful in easing some of the tensions. And that was the context in which our conversation occurred.

So I thought it was a very positive conversation, far more positive than negative. And that is the light in which I meant it to unfold, and I think that is the shape it is taking. So——

Q. The Chinese seemed to make it clear that he would use force——

Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and Kyoto Treaty

Q. On the treaty, Senator Helms says that he would be happy to hold hearings if you would send up the ABM Treaty and the Kyoto treaty. Will you?

The President. Look, the ABM Treaty—we have to conclude START II first; that’s in our national interest. The Kyoto treaty—all the people who say they’re not for the Kyoto treaty insist that we involve the developing nations in it; I agree with them. Even the people who are against the Kyoto treaty under any circumstances say, well, if you’re going to have it you’ve got to have the developing nations in there. So it’s inconsistent for me to send it up when we’re out there working ourselves to death to try to get the developing nations to participate.

Now, this is a relatively new issue, the Kyoto treaty. And the other issue is not ripe yet, clearly, not ripe yet. So to take a matter that has been a matter of national debate for 40 years now, and it is finally a reality—a treaty that has been ratified by 40 other countries, the prospect of dramatically increasing the safety of the American people in the future—and hold it hostage to two matters that are literally not ripe for presentation to the Senate yet would be a grave error, I think. And I hope that we can find a way around that.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:43 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Jiang Zemin of China.

Remarks to Representatives of the Legal Community

July 20, 1999

Thank you. Let me say to all of you, I can’t do any better than that. *[Laughter]* It was terrific. I wish every newspaper in American would reprint those remarks. Thank you, sir. Thank you very much.

I want to thank you all for coming. What a wonderful group we have here. First, I thank Attorney General Reno and Deputy Attorney General Holder for the wonderful job they do in so many ways. Associate Attorney General Fisher is here with them and Bill Lann Lee of the Civil Rights Division. One big civil rights issue is getting him confirmed, I might add. *[Applause]* Thank you.

I thank Secretary Slater and Secretary Daley for joining us, and Ben Johnson, who runs our one America Initiative; and Chris Edley, who used to be part of our administration—still is—I just don’t have to pay him anymore. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, Senator Leahy and Congressman Becerra, for coming. I think there are at least two people in this room, Jerry Shestack and Bill Taylor, who were here in 1963 with President Kennedy. I thank them for coming. Thank you, Mayor Archer, for coming—former Secretary of State Warren Christopher, former Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti.

There are so many people here—I just have to mention one person because it’s my most intimate, personal acquaintance with affirmative action, the president of the American Bar Association, Phil Anderson, gave me a job in 1981, when I was the youngest former Governor in American history—*[laughter]*—with dim future prospects. So I thank him for being here, as well. *[Applause]* Thank you.

And I’d like to say a special word of appreciation to the man who directs our national service program, Senator Harris Wofford, who was very intimately involved with President Kennedy’s civil rights initiatives. Thank you for being here, sir, today.

As has been pointed out, President Kennedy called more than 200 of America’s leading lawyers to this room 36 years ago, the

summer of 1963—when America was awakening to the fact that in our laws and in our hearts, we were still far short of our ideals.

It is difficult today to imagine an America without civil rights. But when I came here 36 years ago in the summer of 1963, as a delegate to American Legion Boys Nation, there were only four African-American boys there, and the hottest issue was what we were going to do about civil rights.

It didn't seem so inevitable back then. Across my native South, there were sheriffs, mayors, Governors defying the courts; police dogs attacking peaceful demonstrators; firehoses toppling children; protesters led away in handcuffs; and too little refuge in the hallowed sanctuary of the law.

It was in this atmosphere that the President turned to America's lawyers and enlisted them in the fight for equal justice. With Vice President Johnson and Attorney General Robert Kennedy at his side, the President asked the lawyers there to remember their duty to uphold justice, especially in places where the principles of justice had been defied.

The lawyers answered that call, creating a new Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and a new tradition of pro bono service in the legal profession. I asked you here today because we need your help as much as ever in our most enduring challenge as a nation, the challenge of creating one America. We have worked hard on that here. In the audience today I see Dr. John Hope Franklin, Governor William Winter, Judy Winston. I think Angela Oh and Dr. Suzan Johnson are here, but I haven't seen them yet—people who worked on this for me to shine a special spotlight on the issues. And we have now institutionalized that effort insofar as we can in the White House. But there is a limit to what we can do without you.

Just as your predecessors, with the Constitution as their shield, stared down the sheriffs of segregation, you must step forward to dismantle our time's most stubborn obstacles to equal justice—poverty, unemployment and, yes, continuing discrimination. Behind every watershed event of the civil rights struggle, lawyers, many pro bono, remain vigilant, securing equal rights for employ-

ment, education, housing, voting, and citizenship for all Americans. Their success, as you just heard from Bill—every time a lawyer does that, it inspires a whole new generation of people to seek the law as a career. I suspect many of us were inspired to go to law school because we thought lawyers were standing up for what was right, not simply because they were making a good living.

Thirty-six years ago, in that 200, there were 50 African-American lawyers. They came to the White House, but they couldn't have found the same welcome in the hotels, restaurants, and lunch counters of America—a cruel irony.

Today, thanks in large measure to the efforts of our lawyers, Americans of all backgrounds and colors and religions are working, living, and learning side by side. The doors of opportunity are open wider than ever. We are living in a time of unprecedented prosperity, with the longest peacetime expansion in our history and the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployments ever recorded since we began to keep separate data in the early 1970's. Our social fabric is mending, with declining rates of welfare, crime, teen pregnancy, and drug abuse.

But the challenge to build one America continues. It is different, but it is just as real as it was when Vernon Jordan started with the Urban League as a young man, or before he was working in the South on registering voters. I saw firsthand in the new markets tour I took a couple of weeks ago, we will never be one America when our central cities, our Indian reservations, our small towns and rural areas here in the most prosperous time in history are still living in the shadows of need and want. They're struggling with unemployment and poverty rates more than twice the national average—over 70 percent on some of our reservations. Your fellow Americans, many of them, are living in houses that it would sicken you to walk through—at the time of our greatest prosperity.

Everything President Johnson worked for and dreamed of that he thought could happen after all these years has still not reached quite a large number of your fellow Americans. So, what are we going to do about it?

We know that two out of five African-American and Latino children under the age of 6 are still in poverty, in spite of all of our prosperity, in spite of the fact that a million children were lifted out of poverty just in the last couple of years. We also know that we can't be one America when a lot of minorities still distrust law enforcement and our legal system generally and shy away from entering the legal profession.

We can't be one America when, here we are, on the eve of the new millennium, when we act as if everything good will happen and all the rationality will fade away, but we still have to read about brutal killings like those in Indiana and Illinois, allegedly conducted on the basis of religious conviction; or what happened in Jasper, Texas; or to Matthew Shepard in Laramie, Wyoming.

The struggle for one America today is more complex than it was 36 years ago, more subtle than it seemed to us that it would be back then. For then, there was the clear enemy of legal segregation and overt hatred. Today, the progress we make in building one America depends more on whether we can expand opportunity and deal with a whole range of social challenges. In 1963 the challenge was to open our schools to all our children. In 1999 the challenge is to make sure all those children get a world-class education.

And of course, if I could just expound on that for a moment, we've worked hard on that. And one of the things we have to do is to bring teachers to the communities where they're needed most. I offered an initiative to give scholarships to young people who would go and teach in inner-city or rural schools that were underserved. And I call for these scholarships as part of our race initiative. I believe they will make a real difference.

The efforts we have made to make the class sizes smaller and to bring the Internet to all of our kids, even in the poorest classrooms, these things are beginning to make a difference. The hundreds of thousands of people who have gone into the elementary schools to teach people to read are making a difference. I can tell you that in the last 3 years we have seen, for the first time in a very long time, at the 4th, 8th, and 12th grade level substantial improvements in

reading scores, our children moving up about half a grade level. But there is a long way to go.

Last year, just before the election, the Congress came together across party lines, and I shouted, "hallelujah," because they voted to create and fund—to create 100,000 school teachers to lower class size in the early grades, something we know that is particularly important to poor children and people who don't come from strong educational backgrounds. And we now have the research that shows it has continuing benefits. I just released the funds to hire the first 30,000 of those teachers.

But now, unbelievably, in this non-election year—although you wouldn't know it from reading the press—[laughter]—there are some who propose to kill the class size initiative and replace it with a program that doesn't guarantee that one red cent will go to hiring a single teacher or reducing the size of a single class. Now, this is very important because we now, finally, for the last 2 years, have a student population that is bigger than the baby boom generation. So it is not only the most diverse in history, it is the largest in history; and about 2 million teachers are scheduled to retire in the next few years.

I'm happy to report, I hope in part because of the importance of education rising in the national consciousness, as the Secretary of Education told me 2 days ago, that we now have 10 percent of our college students saying they're considering being teachers. That's twice the percentage of 5 years ago, and that's encouraging. But we have to get them in the classroom.

So if the research says it's a good idea, if we voted to do it, if we've already funded 30,000 of the teachers, why in the world would we turn around and reverse field? The people who want to kill the 100,000 teacher initiative say they want to do it because they want to improve the quality of the existing teacher core. Well, I'm for that, and we've set aside sums to do it. But that shouldn't be a cover for the fact that we've got to do more to lower class size in the early grades, especially for our poorest children, especially for our minority children, especially for all these children whose first language is not even English.